

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00  
INRE-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 IO-13  
HA-05 OES-09 EB-08 COME-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 MCT-02  
SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03 FAA-00 CAB-02 DOTE-00 OC-06  
CCO-00 /125 W

-----046292 021351Z/44

O P 021250Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9035  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFAE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
COMSIXTHFLT  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4414

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE  
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION: AUGUST 2, 1978 - 1300 HOURS  
LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4365 (DTG 011119Z AUG 78)

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1. SUMMARY: THERE WAS AGAIN FIGHTING IN THE EAST BEIRUT AREA AND A SYRIAN SOLDIER WAS REPORTED KILLED IN SINN AL FIL. A BATTALION OF LEBANESE ARMY REMAINS BOGGED DOWN IN THE KAWKABA AREA. PRESIDENT SARKIS SAID THAT THE ENTRY OF THE ARMY INTO THE SOUTH IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF "A MORE COMPREHENSIVE ROLE WHICH THE ARMY WILL PLAY IN ALL PARTS OF LEBANON." PORT WORKERS ALLEGEDLY ASKED SYRIAN PRESIDENT

ASSAD TO REOPEN THE BEIRUT PORT. THE LEBANESE POUND WEAKENED SUBSTANTIALLY TO LL 2.94 TO THE DOLLAR. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION.

A. THERE WAS FIGHTING IN THE EAST BEIRUT AREAS OF ASHRAFIYAH, AIN AR-RUMMANEH AND FURN ASH-SHUBBAK BETWEEN SYRIAN FORCES AND RIGHTIST MILITIAS DURING THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING OF AUGUST 1. A SYRIAN SOLDIER WAS SHOT DEAD IN SINN AL-FIL ON AUGUST 1, ACCORDING TO VARIOUS SOURCES.

B. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE THREE PERSONS KILLED AND 26 WOUNDED IN WEST BEIRUT. THE WEST BEIRUT INCIDENTS INCLUDED ARTILLERY OR ROCKETS WHICH IMPACTED IN THE CORNICHE MAZRRA AREA (KILLING THREE PERSONS AND WOUNDING OTHERS), SMALL ARMS AND POSSIBLY ARTILLERY OR ROCKET IMPACTS AT THE CORAL BEACH CLUB (PERHAPS SPILLOVER FROM FIRING ON THE IRAQI EMBASSY ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE CLUB) AND, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, SMALL ARMS ROUNDS "FALLING ON THE BEACH AREA FROM THE RIVERA HOTEL TO RAMLAT AL-BAYDA."

C. LEBANESE MILITARY SOURCES SAY THE WEST BEIRUT ROUNDS CAME FROM RIGHTIST MILITIA GUNS IN EAST BEIRUT. THERE IS GOOD CHANCE, HOWEVER, THAT THESE ROUNDS WERE FROM PALESTINIAN OR LEBANESE LEFTIST GUNNERS IN THE WEST. THE IRAQI EMBASSY WAS FIRED UPON AT A TIME WHEN FATAH IS CARRYING ON

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AN ACTIVE AND VIOLENT ANTI-IRAQ CAMPAIGN. THE ROUNDS IN CORNICHE MAZRAA MAY HAVE BEEN OVERSHOTS FROM CLASHES BETWEEN FATAH AND IRAQI-SUPPORTED REJECTIONISTS IN CAMPS SOUTH OF THE MAZRAA AREA.

3. THE ARMY IN THE SOUTH.

A. A BATTALION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY REMAINS BOGGED DOWN IN THE KAWKABA AREA, UNABLE TO ADVANCE BECAUSE OF FIRE FROM ISRAELI BACKED CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN AND UNABLE TO RETREAT WITHOUT DEALING SERIOUS BLOW TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S REMAINING VESTIGES OF AUTHORITY.

B. THE GOL IS MAINTAINING THAT SHELLING WHICH BLOCKED THE ARMY'S ADVANCE CAME FROM ISRAELIS, NOT LEBANESE RIGHTISTS. (COMMENT: OUR SOURCES INDICATE IDF HAS NOT FIRED. END COMMENT.)

C. SA'AD HADDAD, RIGHTIST COMMANDER OPPOSING THE ARMY'S ADVANCE, HAS ANNOUNCED HIS REJECTION OF ORDERS TO REPORT TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, ACCORDING TO THE PHALANGE PARTY'S RADIO, ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ISSUED THEM

UNDER DURESS FROM SYRIA. BEIRUT PRESS ALSO CARRIED REUTERS STORY QUOTING CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN AS SAYING THAT THEY WOULD "FIGHT TO THE FINISH TO BLOCK THE ADVANCE OF THE LEBANESE ARMY."

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SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03 FAA-00 CAB-02 DOTE-00 OC-06  
CCO-00 /125 W  
-----046566 021351Z /44

O P 021250Z AUG 78  
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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 4414

4. GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS.

A. PRESIDENT SARKIS, IN A SPEECH MARKING ARMY DAY ON AUGUST 1, PRAISED THE ARMY'S REBUILDING EFFORTS AND SAID THAT THE ENTRY OF THE ARMY INTO THE SOUTH IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF "A MORE COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL ROLE WHICH THE ARMY WILL PLAY IN ALL PARTS OF LEBANON."

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B. ARMY COMMANDER KHOURY ANNOUNCED THAT CONSCRIPTION WILL BEGIN IN 1979. HE SAID THAT THIS WOULD BE PART OF THE EFFORT TO BUILD A "NEW ARMY." MEANWHILE KHOURY AND SARKIS TRADED COMPLIMENTS WITH ONE ANOTHER ON THEIR "WISE SILENCE" IN THE FACE OF CRITICISM FOR INACTION.

C. THE PRIME MINISTER, SALIM AL-HOSS, RESPONDED TO PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES WITH A STATEMENT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT: (1) IS DETERMINED TO "END ALL SEMBLANCES OF ILLEGAL CONDITIONS" (A EUPHEMISM FOR DISARMING THE VARIOUS MILITIAS)... WITH THE SPEED THAT AVAILABLE POTENTIALS PERMIT" (A EUPHEMISM FOR NO TIME SOON); (2) WILL TAKE ACTION TO CLOSE AN ILLEGAL RADIO STATIONS; (3) HAS MADE POLITICAL DECISION TO END THE ARMY TO THE SOUTH, BUT LEFT THE TIMING UP TO THE MILITARY COMMAND; (4) IS DETERMINED TO IMPLEMENT CONSCRIPTION AND TO SEEK LEGAL AUTHORITY TO REMOVE OFFICERS IDENTIFIED WITH ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER DURING THE CIVIL WAR; (5) HAS A SECURITY PLAN IN FORCE IN WHICH LEBANESE AND ARAB DETERRENT FORCE UNITS COORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES; AND (6) IS PLAGUED BY "MALFEASANCE AND INEFFICIENCY" STEMMING FROM THE 1975-76 CIVIL WAR.

4. PORT WORKERS PROTEST.

THE SAHAFIYAH NEWS AGENCY REPORTED THAT THE FAMILIES OF PORT WORKERS CABLED SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD, AUGUST 1, ASKING HIM TO REOPEN THE PORT. THE FAMILIES REPORTEDLY INCLUDED A DERNUNCIATION OF THE PHALANGE AND NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTIES AND CALLED FOR THE CRUSHING OF THE PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS NEAR THE PORT, AS IT IS "A DESTRUCTIVE GERM" AND "THE SOURCE OF ALL UNREST AND CRIMES."

5. POUND WEAKENS.

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LEBANESE POUND WEAKENED SUBSTANTIALLY ON AUGUST 1, WHEN IT FELL TO LL 2.94 TO THE DOLLAR. (POUND HAD BEEN AT LL 2.90 TO THE DOLLAR ON JULY 31. FALL PROBABLY REFLECTS IN PART FAILURE OF LEBANESE ARMY TO GET TO TIBNIN.)

6. AIRPORT STATUS.

AIRCRAFT OPERATED NORMALLY THROUGH BEIRUT AIRPORT. CONTRADICTING PRESS REPORT OF A "RUSH ON TICKET COUNTERS," FULLY

BOOKED AND WAIT-LISTED FLIGHTS CONTINUE TO DEPART 40 PERCENT  
EMPTY ON AVERAGE. LOAD FACTORS ON MEA'S DEPARTING FLIGHTS WERE  
54 PERCENT IN WEEK PRECEEDING EMBASSY ADVISORY ANNOUNCEMENT  
AND HAVE RISEN TO ONLY 57-58 PERCENT SINCE JULY 27. GROSS  
PASSENGER DEPARTURES ARE ONLY 2-3 PERCENT HIGHER THAN 1977  
AVERAGE FOR SAME WEEK.

PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 02 aug 1978  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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